

# e-Bugle

Garrett Bugle Internet Edition

Volume 60

November 2013

No. 9



## Calendar

Fri., Oct. 25	Pick up your <i>Bugle</i> at the PO	Mon., Nov. 11	Town Council Meeting, Town Hall, 7:30 pm
Sat., Oct. 26	Spooky Woods, Porcupine Woods, 7 pm (see p 2)	Tues., Nov. 12	Lunch Bunch, Town Hall, 12:30 pm; <i>Bugle</i> deadline, 4 pm
Sun., Oct. 27	Annual pumpkin carving contest, 1 to 3 pm on the basketball court (see p 2)	Mon., Nov. 18	<i>e-Bugle</i> available online
Mon., Oct. 28	Last weekly pickup of yard waste	Fri., Nov. 22	Pick up your <i>Bugle</i> at the PO
Thurs., Oct. 31	GPES Halloween costume parade through town, 2:15 pm (see p 3); Trick or Treat night	Sat., Nov. 23	GPNS Art & Craft Fair, Town Hall, 10 am–5 pm; Last weekly Farmers Market at Penn Place for the year
Mon., Nov. 4	Monthly yard-waste pickup	Sun., Nov. 24	GPNS Art & Craft Fair, Town Hall, 10 am–5 pm
Fri., Nov. 8	Deadline for submitting names for babysitting/snow-shoveling list in <i>Bugle</i> (see p 5); Film Society: <i>Smoke Signals</i> , Town Hall, dinner 7 pm, film 8 pm (p 4)	Thurs., Nov. 22	Happy Thanksgiving and Hanukkah from the <i>Bugle</i> staff
		Wed., Nov. 27	No Citizens Assoc. Meeting

## Scripted Right Out of *Our Town*

Hard to imagine a more beautiful evening than the one we got for the Town Council's October meeting: A clear sky with a bright moon, and (as your reporter walked from Rokeby to Kenilworth) early autumn leaves glimmering on the lawns of Garrett Park.

The Town Hall was absolutely full—overflowing. Garrett Parkers were drawn by two issues: a proposed increase in the budget for the Town Archives, and a grant for additional sidewalks in town.

Kacky Chantry read aloud the motion that funds be added to Archives. It passed unanimously, to lusty applause.

The second matter—approval of the motion to accept the Safe Routes to School grant—took up most of the rest of this month's meeting. Funds would be used to rebuild Clermont's sidewalks, and to add sidewalks to Oxford and Kenilworth.

The Mayor began with a general statement in favor of the grant. "This is probably the only opportunity we have to get this federal grant in the foreseeable future." In terms of how we carry

it out, "We have lots of flexibility. The walks can be relatively narrow; they can for the most part avoid trees; and of course we can replant trees if we have to. We are free to carry out this project with an eye to the environment, the town's character, and the character of the town's houses." The first step in all of this is a preliminary design which we could take to a hearing in order to determine more precisely what we'd like.

A series of citizens now took the microphone, some to speak in favor and most to speak against.

Gideon Kantor pointed out that "inspired by the beauty of Garrett Park," older people in town like to walk. But they "need protection; sidewalks give us protection."

Dave Almy had serious questions about technical problems in the construction of the walks, and Tony Altar argued that despite the free money from the government, the sidewalks will cost us in maintenance and perhaps in other ways as well. He also argued that insufficient time has been given citizens to voice their opinions. Susan Miller agreed that "things are moving too fast,"

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and worried that our tree canopy will be affected. She called for a “sense of the town” vote.

“You’ll never get those old growth trees back,” said Meg Chrisler. John Youle remarked that “Garrett Park is completely safe already. Let Oxford stay the same—it’s nice the way it is.” Likewise, Barry Castleman said “Oxford is already very safe. I don’t see the point of building all these sidewalks.” George Martin noted that “We’re being asked to accept something without seeing it.” Margaret Goldsborough said that while “drinking my strong cup of English tea” she found herself wondering why we could not postpone the vote. John Mulligan seconded the postponement idea.

Alison Pearce now rose to speak in favor of accepting the grant. She noted that 83 townspeople have signed her pro-sidewalks petition, many of them parents of children— “and children will arguably be most impacted by this.” Phil Normandy, the town arborist, spoke after Alison and took a neutral position, though he reminded the gathering that “it is possible to have sidewalks and mature trees. We did it on Kenilworth.” He also gave it as his opinion that Garrett Parkers talking to one another in their Town Hall on

a lovely October night is “scripted right out of Thornton Wilder’s *Our Town*.”

Now Councilmembers spoke. Tara Flynn said that “Oxford is a bit treacherous.” Joanna Welch said “I don’t want this to be a railroading.” Hans Wegner said that he will vote in favor of proceeding. “We will only see a plan when we begin the process. We are in control of the process, and can manage it.” The Mayor reiterated his belief that we should do the preliminary engineering design so that we can then know whether we want to do any of this.

With amendments, the motion to go forward on a preliminary engineering plan was unanimously approved.

The subject of the meeting then moved to upcoming street rebuilding work involving a top coat and stabilization, whatever those words may mean. M.T. Laney will be the contractor, and the work should take a couple of months. We’re not sure we’ll be able to do it this season, but we’re aiming for it.

Tara Flynn and Phil Schulp have been developing personnel policies for the town, and are now ready to schedule a work session to discuss them.

Margaret Soltan

## Citizen Association News

*Spooky Woods.* It’s that time again! Each year Spooky Woods gets bigger and spookier. This year the GPCA’s annual Spooky Woods will kick off in Porcupine Woods at 7 pm on Saturday, October 26. Kids of all ages are invited to join us to share scares and laughs at this Garrett Park tradition. Volunteer ghouls are needed that day to set up and during the event to act in “haunted stations.” Please contact Sean Conlan before the event if you would like to volunteer or if you have an idea for a “spooky station.”

*Pumpkin carving.* Please join us on Sunday, October 27, from 1 to 3 pm on the basketball court for the annual pumpkin carving contest. Snacks and refreshments will be provided for this event. We request that you please bring your own pumpkin and tools.

*Newcomers Reception.* The Newcomers Reception was a terrific success! We met ~8 families new to Garrett Park. Check out the board in the Post Office to see pictures (thanks, Vickie Bail!). The CA would also like to thank all the residents who came out to welcome new folks and talk about their groups.

*Future meetings.* Do you have a suggestion or idea for a meeting topic that you feel would be of interest to the town? If so, please forward your thoughts to Michael Lutkenhouse at Box 456.

*Annual dues.* The Citizens Association 2013 annual dues are being collected. The annual dues are \$10 for individuals and \$20 per family. Thank you to all of those who have already paid. For

those who have not, please submit dues by mailing them to the Citizens Association at Box 456.

*Garrett Park listserv.* To join this electronic forum, which allows neighbors to communicate information about town concerns, safety issues, upcoming events, and recommended services, e-mail Todd Harris or sign in at [groups.yahoo.com/group/GarrettParkneighbors/join](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/GarrettParkneighbors/join).

The listserv will not be used for unsolicited marketing, and you can unsubscribe at any time.

*Questions or comments for the Citizens Association?* If so, please send a note to P.O. Box 456 or e-mail Michael Lutkenhouse.

The *Garrett Bugle* is a publication of the Citizens Association of Garrett Park, published 10 times a year. Publication of the *Bugle* is supported by member dues. All residents of Garrett Park are members of the Citizens Association. Yearly dues (\$20 per family or \$10 per individual per address) can be sent to Citizens Association, Box 456, Garrett Park, MD 20896.

**Citizens Association Officers:**  
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First-class subscriptions cost \$15 (bulk mail subscriptions are no longer available). Letters to the editor can be submitted by mail or hand to *Bugle* staff or by e-mail through the town Web site: [www.garrettpark-md.gov/submit-BugleArticle.php](http://www.garrettpark-md.gov/submit-BugleArticle.php). The editor reserves the right to edit submissions for length and clarity. Unsigned letters will not be printed.

Town Manager’s Notes

October is an especially fun month with several annual events. On the weekend of October 19 and 20, we had the annual *Attic in the Street*, sponsored by the Garrett Park Women’s Club, and Town Arborist Phil Normandy led the annual Tree Walk around town to share information about our trees. Both events were well attended, and more is in store:

*Spooky Woods.* This thrilling Halloween event, sponsored by the Citizens Association, awaits you on Saturday, October 26, beginning at 7 pm (to 9 pm). This is a walk through Porcupine Woods that starts at the basketball court with light refreshments to fortify your courage!

*Halloween.* Garrett Park Elementary School will hold its Halloween parade on October 31 at 2:15 pm. The parade will start at the school, proceed down Oxford Avenue, turn south on Montrose to the dead end, and return to the School. There will be over 500 participants in this year’s parade! The streets will close to vehicular traffic at 1:30 pm.

And, of course, Halloween will be celebrated that night with Trick or Treaters strolling through town. Watch out for the kids! Please drive slowly and with headlights on even before dusk, for everyone’s safety.

*Leaf pickup.* In addition to all the fun, leaf pickup, which began during the week of October 15, is ongoing. Please rake your leaves to the curb for pickup. Parents, remind your children not to play in the leaves by the street, and drivers, please be watchful as you drive by the piles of leaves!

*Yard-waste removal.* Remember, from November to February, yard waste will be collected the first Monday of each month only. That dependable harbinger of spring, weekly collection, will resume in March.

As always, if you have questions or concerns, please call or come by the Town Office.

Gene Swearingen, Town Manager

Visit Garrett Park’s Web site:  
[www.garrettpark-md.gov](http://www.garrettpark-md.gov)



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GPES

Will you be wanting to watch the annual Halloween parade of students? This year the parade will begin around 2:15 pm and go down Oxford Street to Montrose, hang a u-turn at Montrose and Parkside, and return to the school for the classroom celebrations. If you need to get to the school to help with the parties, get there before 1:30 pm, because access to the school will be limited by street closures at Kenilworth and Strathmore, and at Montrose and Strathmore. Oxford will be closed off in front of 4600 Oxford. Try not to park on Oxford so there will be a wider stretch of pavement for the students to walk on.

Volunteering is alive and well at GPES. There are several ways that you can join in to continue providing activities, programs, and support for the students. Community service projects include sandwich making for the homeless, cleaning up Rock Creek Park, and Pennies for Patients. Save your Box Tops for Education labels and send them in to the office. Also, Kindergarten Connect acts as an information contact for Kindergarten parents. Contact Shana Trostel, [trostels@mail.nih.gov](mailto:trostels@mail.nih.gov), for information about any of these projects.

If you are looking for part time work during the 2013–2014 school year, there is a need for substitute lunch/recess aides. Applicants must be at least 18 years old and will be paid at the rate of \$13.88 per hour. If this might interest you, please call Mrs. Georgatsos, administrative secretary, at the school (301-929-2170). She can go through the paperwork details with you.

Mary Moyer

Green Again

The *Bugle’s* green banner this month is courtesy of Richard and Doreen Siegel of Kenilworth Avenue in honor of their beautiful children and grandchildren. Richard and Doreen could not do without them. Our thanks go out to the Siegels.

As of now, the banner fund is solvent until the start of February 2014. Anyone else like to join in the “greening” of Garrett Park? If so, please make out a check for \$45 to the Citizens Association and mail it to me at Box 98. Many thanks.

Mary Moyer

### Services for Seniors

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# The Great Post Office Fire Documented

Garrett Park’s diligent young archivist, Abigail Kabaker, has found a most interesting newspaper article about a heretofore undocumented event in the history of Penn Place. Here are some excerpts:

The post office at Garrett Park, Md., together with the building in which it was located, is a wreck... The building was discovered to be on fire between 1 and 2 o’clock this morning, and although every effort was made to save it, it was burned to the ground and all its contents were destroyed. It is supposed that the store, in which the post office was located, which was kept by the Hurdle Brothers, was first entered by burglars, who broke in one of the front windows, for the cash register was found to have been taken across the railroad track. It is not known how much plunder the burglars secured, but it is thought that they set the building on fire and then made their escape.

The Messrs. Hurdle, who lived over the store, were not awakened until the blowing of the whistle of an express train that passed, and then it was as much as they could do to save their own lives and the lives of their families... In reference to the burglary, [Mr. Hurdle] said that this was the second time the post office had been broken into.

*Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.),  
September 11, 1893

The building was apparently quickly rebuilt on its original foundations. This explains why the Penn Place of today looks much like the building seen in very early photographs, but with some subtle differences—the porch trim was changed, the windows were in slightly different positions, and the slate roof had a different pattern. Check out the display case in the Post Office lobby to see how Penn Place evolved over the years.

Our archivist is working industriously to make our archives searchable by computer. She will be working extra hours to accomplish this, so the archives will be open when she is there.

If you haven’t visited the archives or if you have questions about Garrett Park history or about the house you live in, drop by whenever you see the “Archives is Open” sign.

The archives can also use volunteers. There are vacancies on the Archives Advisory Committee that advises the Town Council on archives matters. Please contact the Town Office if you have an interest in the town’s history and a little time to give. Or volunteer a couple of hours a week to help us organize and digitize our records. We welcome serious high school students who need to earn SSL credits.

## See Smoke Signals with GPFS

On Friday, November 8, at 8 pm, the Garrett Park Film Society will present *Smoke Signals*, a film about two modern, young Coeur d’Alene Indian men dealing with loss who together go on a journey of discovery. It is “witty, funny, serious, and heartbreaking all at the same time.” While it deals with Indian culture and values, its tackles issues of family, culture, tradition, and friendship that transcend ethnicity. Rated PG-13 for intense images, it is a film that should appeal to all.

Dinner, served at 7 pm, will feature Southwestern fare. See the poster in the PO or the GP Neighbors listserv announcement the week before the film for details. Cost is usually \$10 per person for adults and \$5 for children 11 or under. Soda, bottled water, beer, and wine are offered at prices ranging from \$1 to \$5. Coupons may be used for all drinks and popcorn when available: one coupon = \$1.

Admission to the film is free to GPFS members; otherwise, it is \$5 per person or \$10 per family.

Hope to see you at the Town Hall on November 8!

## Save the Dates

The Garrett Park Women’s Club would like you to add these dates to your calendars:

Friday, December 13: Holiday Sing-along, led by Doug Mader; 7.30 pm, Town Hall

Saturday, December 14: Santa’s Visit, 2 pm, Town Hall



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- ♪ Our condolences to Kathy Benjamin on the death of her mother, Virginia Wilburn Keany, on October 16. She had lived to age 103. A memorial service was held on October 19 at Maplewood Park Place in Bethesda.
- ♪ Holiday season stamps are now available at the PO for your greetings. This year's stamps show a Madonna and child or a poinsettia plant.
- ♪ If you are in need of a 2010 telephone directory (our latest!), pick one up from the Town Office. Anyone want to start working on a new one? Tell Elizabeth.
- ♪ The *e-Bugle* is available online the Monday after the Town Council meeting. You can find it on the town Web site, [www.garrettpark-md.gov](http://www.garrettpark-md.gov).
- ♪ Garrett Park youngsters who want to earn money this year, please sign up for the baby-sitting, snow-shoveling, and other chores list by November 8 for publication in the next *Bugle*. Call the Town Office (301-933-7488) and leave your name, age, and what you are willing to do. Maybe we'll even have snow this year, if we don't have a heat wave! Deadline is Friday, November 8.
- ♪ From the past: "Kid Elberfeld, of the Nationals, has spent the whole winter improving things around his farm at Garrett Park, and now has everything in ship shape. 'Cy' Cummings, the Maryland legislator, presented the Kid with a fox hound, which is one of the most valued possessions of the Elberfeld household." (*The Washington Times*, January 13, 1911)

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### Art at Penn Place

Ann Gordon's art is on display at Penn Place until November 3. Ann provided the following about her art:

"I like to create a dialog with what I see and what I put down with a brush. My paintings tell a story. They track where I have been and who was with me. I tell the story of the quality of the light and time of day. Sometimes my paintings express an emotion that I cannot put into words. I like to work on site. If that means sweat and bugs, so be it.

"Art has been my life. I see the world as a canvas. I have been a working artist in Montgomery County for 40 years, beginning as an Adult Education teacher. For 16 years I taught ceramics in various schools around Montgomery County. I have a BFA from American University with a concentration in painting. In 1985 I went to work as an Arts Specialist for the U.S. Army. I worked at Arlington Hall, Ft. McNair, Ft. Myer, and Walter Reed. In 2005, I retired and now devote my time to painting. Several days a week you can find me at the Smithsonian American Art Museum guiding tours for children and adults."

From November 4 to 30, the work of Glenn Roberts will be on display. Glenn says:

"I first thought about painting as a child in Bayonne, New Jersey, and after years of my begging for a particular art kit advertised on TV, my parents broke down and got it. But I found the directions confusing and the kit hard to use, and nothing came of it. At college there was a studio art course aimed at nonartists, but I was not adventurous enough to take it. Then at 24 (in 1971)

I moved to San Francisco and had an apartment in the Haight Ashbury to furnish. I borrowed some large acrylic paintings to fill my walls. When I had to give the paintings back, I decided to make my own art to cover my then-blank walls. How hard could it be?

"It had taken years for me to start painting. But I loved it, and in 1975 I quit my political job to paint full time. I attended adult education classes at the then-tiny San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and even did a summer at the formidable San Francisco Art Institute. When my unemployment ran out, I drove a taxicab at night to support myself. Then after several years, and many paintings, my ardor for painting failed me. I returned to political work and let the painting lapse. Canvas, brushes, and paints were stored away. Years passed until our daughters begged me to paint again. So I did. I still loved it. In fact, 8 years later I am still at it.

"I was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease (PD) in 2000. PD can cut you off from the outside world. Speech softens, typing becomes virtually impossible, and going to an artist's show is a major event, especially since I do not drive anymore. Art (so far) remains a relatively unaffected way for me to express myself. I hope it lasts. As I struggle to communicate, my colors are getting brighter, and my figures are morphing into vague shapes. I do not know what that means but I do not intend to give up painting. A garage at our new home has been converted to a studio, and my wife and daughters are solidly behind me.

"Here I come."



## Trudy Morse

Gertrude (Trudy) Morse, age 94, passed away peacefully on August 21 at Arden Courts, Potomac. Trudy was an inspirational force who brought people together. As a world traveler, she danced with the Whirling Dervishes in Egypt, fed the hungry in Africa, and was one of the first Americans to visit the former Soviet Union and China. She was an activist involved in the civil rights and peace movements, promoting breast feeding and natural childbirth, the League of Women Voters, and a host of other social issues. She was a real estate broker and land consultant, who advocated for low cost housing and zoning reform. She was a poet and jazz musician, and in the last 25 years of her life she toured the world performing with Cecil Taylor, Kitt Jordan, and Sun Ra. She was a founding member of three congregations, Beth El, Frabragen, and Am Kolel. She found good messages in all faiths.

Trudy was born on Brooklyn, New York, but resided in this area for over 50 years. Her two husbands, Lincoln Wiseman and Malcolm Morse, passed away many years ago. She is survived by her loving children, Ilene Ianniello and husband Dan, of Connecticut; Alan Wiseman and wife Paula; Michael Morse and wife Mary; Dr. Melvin Morse; Sarah Morse and husband David Kathan, all of Maryland; and Gale Morse and husband Jay Volanth, of Connecticut. She had 21 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren. She is also survived by her brother, Bernard Gorcey of Long Branch, New Jersey, and numerous nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her brother Leo Gorcey and her sister Shirley.

Memorials were held at the Garrett Park Town Hall and Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church. She will be greatly missed by family and friends.

## Letter to the Editor

### Opposed to Sidewalks Grant

As expected, the acceptance of the Safe Route to School grant with two well-intended yet meaningless amendments was approved by the Council at its Monday meeting. The Mayor's explanation as to why the required public notice and discussion did not *precede* "all the hard work" put forth in order to obtain the grant would be laughable were it not so indefensible. Blame the holidays: Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's—time just got away from these busy bees. The mayor has put forward that the deadline for grant application demanded quick action. Subsequently, we have learned that the Safe Route to School Grant opportunity extends into 2014. Not even a laughable explanation for this duplicitous representation was offered.

The effort to have the Council delay the vote to accept the grant, or to possibly reject this grant and apply again was rejected. What the Council voted for, in spite of the irregular, incomplete,

and questionable process thus far (and from little more than a pencil sketch of the proposed sidewalks) was to accept what has been aptly termed "free money" from a honey pot that we are assured by the Mayor is all but bottomless. Continuing with this paradigm then, it makes sense to accept the grant money to fund the engineering studies required to see if and how the proposed sidewalk installations work out. *Unless you have fallen down the proverbial rabbit hole, it does not.* Unfortunately, however, the logic operating is that the town only has to pay for the engineering studies if the project doesn't go forward and the town decides not to proceed. Is this a proud suggestion that the town is wisely managing our money, or a likely indicator that the project will go forward? Even more recent residents of town can figure that one out. Long-time residents recognize the continuance of a style of town governance that is shameful. Predictably, citizen committee members are being appointed to help make the sidewalks happen. Note that not even the Fourth of July holiday, summer vacations, or incessant rain have been allowed to let time get away from action in this instance.

Space and time (*Bugle* deadline) do not permit detailing the numerous unknown and/or negative unintended consequences surrounding the proposed new sidewalk installation. Use of the town right-of-way for the proposed new sidewalks should not be allowed to subordinate the rights of property owners who would be significantly impacted by this intrusive venture. Rather the town has the duty to make the case for what it proposes to do. The case has not been made.

Anne Martin

(I live on Oxford St. but not on the proposed sidewalk side of the street.)

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## Letter from the Mayor

At the October Town Council meeting, the Council voted unanimously to accept a \$561,000 grant from the State for the Safe Routes to School program. This grant would ultimately allow the town to build a sidewalk on the south side of Oxford from Montrose to Weymouth, to extend an existing sidewalk on the west side of Kenilworth from Waverly to Argyle, and to replace the existing sidewalk on Montrose from Waverly to Clermont and along Clermont from Montrose to Strathmore. All parts of the project are to be constructed entirely upon town-owned right of way. The grant application was based only on rough sketch planning and cursory engineering observation. The decision by the Council allows the town to conduct preliminary design and engineering for the project at state and federal expense to permit a more detailed consideration of whether to move forward with the final design and construction at the end of that process. In doing so the town takes the risk that if it decides not to proceed with the project at that point, the preliminary design will be at town expense.

Before making this decision, the Council discussed and authorized the grant application at its December 2012 meeting, discussed it at its January 2013 meeting, and as soon as it received an award in August, which was the earliest that the town knew what it might be able to do, announced the potential project on the GP mailing list, on the GarrettParkneighbors listserv, in the *Bugle*, and on the town bulletin board. It posted the application and award letter on the town Web site, noting its availability in the other sources. At its September meeting, it discussed the grant possibility and scheduled a public hearing for September 23. The town also established and publicized a special e-mail address for people to provide their comments to the Council. Judging by the overflowing attendance at the hearing, the many people who testified, the two petitions with almost 150 signatures submitted, and the 40 e-mails received, the Council had a substantial basis to judge the citizen reaction and concerns when it met on October 14 to hear even more testimony before it decided to accept the grant.

In making the decision, the Council included in its resolution many principles that reflect the desires of the community:

It said that there would be a full public review of the project at the completion of preliminary design. This is because no design has been done to date that would allow an informed discussion of impacts. After the public and the Council have had a chance to review the additional information

developed, the Council will decide whether to proceed.

It instructed the Mayor to make all reasonable efforts to keep town residents informed of the progress of the project, and to solicit public input at critical decision points. This letter is part of that process.

It told the Mayor to appoint a Sidewalks Citizens Advisory Committee, which includes at least two residents who own property adjacent to the proposed sidewalks, to assist the town in implementing the project. The purpose of the committee is to consult with stakeholders and make recommendations to the town. I have already recruited this committee, to be chaired by Lori Conlan, which includes residents whose property fronts on each of the three parts of the project, a strong advocate of the project, a strong opponent of the project, and two people who have technical expertise in design and engineering.

It said that the town will consult with homeowners who have property adjoining the town right of way in which the project would be built in order to ascertain and implement ways to minimize the impact of the project upon their homes and landscaping, consistent with constructing sidewalks and curbs.

It made clear that the town will make all efforts to preserve trees and plantings wherever possible, to move them if required and reasonable, and to replace them if they must be removed and cannot be moved to another location.

It emphasized that the town will comply with all state and federal historic preservation, disability access, environmental protection, and watershed protection requirements in pursuing this project. At the meeting the town committed to exploring permeable materials for construction of the sidewalks.

As is the case with every other major project in our town, the advocates and opponents have strong and reasonable bases for their positions. They disagree on how they see the town in the future. Some people are happy with the decision; some are unhappy. I hope that all will agree that they may disagree on the substance but they respect the integrity of those who hold a different view. We are all good people with differing perspectives. I hope that we will also appreciate the honest and forthright way in which Councilmembers went about making a difficult decision. They are all volunteers who are taking on a heavy responsibility in trying to do what they believe is best for a town that they love.

Peter Benjamin

# How to Use Compost

I hope you have started a compost pile by now and are looking forward to harvesting it next spring. If so, these are some of the things you can do with your compost:

- Mulch your trees and shrubs: work it into the top 2 to 3 inches of soil all the way to the drip line.
- Top dress flowering plants, small shrubs, and small fruits.
- Improve your soil by changing its structure:
  - When added to clay soil, compost will bind itself to the clay particles, creating larger particles, thereby improving drainage.
  - Compost will attract earthworms, which will aerate the soil and contribute to increased activity of beneficial fungi.
- Make compost tea (see opposite). There is anecdotal evidence that compost tea, when

sprayed on the lawn or other areas of the landscape, will also improve soil.

So if you haven’t started composting yet, there is still time to pick up a free bin at the Town Office, or just find a place, away from tree roots, in your yard where you can start a pile for leaves and grass clippings.

## Making compost tea

Place a shovelful or two of compost in an old pillowcase or in a cheesecloth bag and steep in a bucket of water for a day or two. Remove the bag, strain the remaining tea, and spray it directly on the foliage of flowers, shrubs, trees, or your lawn. The extract will become anaerobic within two to three day, so it is best to use right after brewing.

Some of the benefits attributed to regular compost tea applications (foliar spray) come from establishing colonies of beneficial microbes on the surface of leaves. Other benefits include

- providing nutrients and growth-enhancing enzymes and
- suppressing certain fungal diseases, notably late blight of tomatoes and potatoes, powdery mildew on grapes, and Botrytis blight on beans.

*Note:* There is some evidence that compost tea made with sugar or molasses may contain measurable amounts of *E. coli* and should not be used on vegetables or fruit. The recipe above would not include sugars if you avoid adding sugars to your compost pile.

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